

Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund 2020/2021

GUIDANCE INFORMATION

Policy Statement

The Advanced Learner Loan Bursary (ALLB) Fund is available to learners who have been approved for an Advanced Learner Loan.

The funds can be used to provide:

Additional Learning Support (ALS)

- Support for learners with additional needs to access and participate in learning.

Discretionary Learner Support (DLS)

- Financial support for learners who are facing financial hardship.

Support is limited and cannot cover all costs associated with all study programmes. It is always advisable to consider the availability of other strands of financial support and enquire, for example, about what financial assistance is available through the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) as DLS must not be used where other sources of funding are available.

Each application is individually assessed and **all assistance is subject to the availability of funds.** Learners who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to it. If demand exceeds the availability of funds, reduced awards may be given and when the fund is fully committed, no further awards will be made.

Applications are assessed against household income. Means testing will be rigorous but not excessive and supporting evidence of personal circumstances and/or relevant benefit evidence will be required. Other sources of financial support will be taken into consideration when processing applications.

All on-going bursary payments will be subject to a minimum of 90% attendance and meeting WUC expectations of coursework and behaviour or payments may be withheld. Learners are responsible for monitoring their attendance and addressing any discrepancies.

Category	Criteria	Bursary Support Available
Additional Learning Support	<p>These funds are non means tested to support learners with additional needs to access and participate in their learning.</p> <p>Assessment interview will be required by WUC's Learner Support Team</p>	<p>Support can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:1 or group support • Special exam arrangements • Loan of equipment or resources • Any other necessary adjustments under the Equality Act
Discretionary Learner Support Funds	<p>Financial assistance for learners with a taxable household income not exceeding £35,000 per annum</p> <p>Household earnings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earnings from employment, must not exceed £35,000 • Job Seekers Allowance • Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) • Universal Credit • Pension • Working Tax Credits • Young people in care/care leavers 	<p>Course Costs: clothing, books, equipment and materials deemed to be necessary to complete your Study Programme may be paid.</p> <p>Food Allowance: maximum £4.00 per day</p> <p>Travel: assistance with travel costs.</p> <p>Fees: professional membership, exam, registration or DBS</p>

Applications from households with an income exceeding £35,000 are not normally considered. However, if you feel that you have extenuating circumstances, please submit an application and provide a covering letter to explain your situation. Supporting evidence should also be provided.

Eligibility

To be eligible for support, you must have been approved for an Advanced Learner Loan, however, priority will be given to:

- Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Parents who need help with childcare
- Ex-military personnel
- Young Adult Carers – individual assessments will be undertaken

The following groups are **NOT** eligible for DLS

- Waged apprentices
- Learners on HE courses
- Learners in prison or released on temporary licence

Additional Information

Financial Award Conditions

In order to receive financial awards, learners must achieve a satisfactory attendance of 90% and above and meet WUC expectations of coursework and behaviour. If attendance does not meet the requirements, payments can be withheld, subject to a progress review with the learner's course tutor. Personal circumstances will be taken into consideration when determining if payments are to be re-instated.

Awards for living costs are outside the scope of the fund and are not available from the Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund.

Exceptional Circumstances

In exceptional circumstances discretionary payments can be considered for costs which have been identified as a barrier to participating in learning. Applications for discretionary payments will be referred to a Review Panel for assessment.

Financial Hardship

Applications can be made where household income exceeds the guidelines and evidence of financial hardship can be demonstrated e.g. redundancy, bereavement, debt management. Supporting evidence will be necessary to fully assess an application and to determine the level of support available.

Changes of Circumstances

Learners will be required to disclose any change of circumstances during the year which may affect their eligibility.

Appeals

If you do not agree with a decision and wish to appeal, please put in writing to The Student Finance Supervisor within 7 days of being informed of the assessment outcome. Appeals will be resolved within 21 working days.

Childcare

For learners aged 20+, financial assistance is available for childcare towards term time care costs only. It is the learner's responsibility to find a term time only carer or be responsible for covering any additional costs.

Conditions:

- Childcare providers must be Ofsted Registered.
- Childcare will only be provided for timetabled days.
- It is expected that holidays will not be taken during term time, but should this occur, childcare costs for the period of absence will not be paid.
- All payments will be made direct to the child care provider.

Childcare – learners under the age of 20

If you need help with childcare costs whilst you study please contact Care to Learn on 0800 121 8989 or visit www.gov.uk/care-to-learn

Application Process

Applicants must complete the relevant application form from the fund they are applying to and clearly identify the support they feel they need to achieve their course of study, within eligible guidelines.

Applicants must provide the income information and supporting evidence as detailed in the application form.

A decision on the application will be made within 14 working days from the date received and funds will be allocated following enrolment. If all funds have been allocated, your details will be recorded on a waiting list.

Bursaries are awarded on a half termly basis and where possible are paid for directly e.g. meal credits, print credits, childcare.

WUC cannot take responsibility for any correspondence lost or mislaid in the post.

Please note:

Applications for financial assistance are valid for one academic year only. Should you return to WUC in September 2021 and still require financial support, a new application form must be completed and up to date evidence provided.